

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-14. (Cancelled)

Claim 15 (new): A process for the preparation of small particles through precipitation, which process employs a fluid solution comprising a solvent and solute to be precipitated and a non-gaseous antisolvent, said solvent being soluble in or miscible with the antisolvent and said solute being substantially insoluble in the antisolvent, wherein the process comprises the successive steps of:

- a. feeding a stream of the fluid solution and a stream of the antisolvent into a mixing zone where both streams are thoroughly mixed to achieve a condition of super saturation;
 - b. feeding the resulting mixture of the fluid solution and the antisolvent into a nucleation zone allowing nucleation to commence;
 - c. allowing the nuclei formed in the nucleation zone to grow to particles with a volume weighted average diameter of no more than 50 μm ;
 - d. collecting the particles and separating them from the antisolvent;
- and wherein during or following step b., and prior to step d. additional antisolvent is admixed to the mixture of the fluid solution and the antisolvent.

Claim 16 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the additional antisolvent is admixed after the precipitated particles have grown to a volume weighted average diameter of at least 0.1 μm .

Claim 17 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the antisolvent is admixed at least 1 second after completion of step a.

Claim 18 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the ratio of the solution flow rate to antisolvent flow rate in step a. is between 5:1 and 1:10.

Claim 19 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the collected particles, when reaching the end of the nucleation zone or immediately prior to the admixture of additional antisolvent, contain at least 1 wt. % solvent.

Claim 20 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the additional antisolvent is admixed in an amount effective to reduce the solvent content of the collected particles to less than 1 wt. %.

Claim 21 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein less than 25% of the nuclei formed in the process are formed in the mixing zone.

Claim 22 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the residence time within the mixing zone is less than 15 seconds.

Claim 23 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the mixing energy applied in the mixing zone exceeds 1 J/kg.

Claim 24 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the residence time within the nucleation and growth zone is at least 3 seconds.

Claim 25 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the solution comprises between 0.0001 and 30 wt.% of the solute.

Claim 26(new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the antisolvent is a supercritical or nearcritical fluid.

Claim 27 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein the particles obtained from step c. have a particle size distribution with a standard deviation of less than 50% of the volume weighted average particle size.

Claim 28 (new): The process according to claim 15, wherein at least 10 wt.% of the solute present in the stream of the fluid solution of step a. is recovered in the particles obtained in step d.